Cambridge Assessment International Education

Syllabus

Cambridge International AS & A Level Hinduism 9487

Use this syllabus for exams in 2026.
Exams are available in the June series.
Exams are also available in the November series in Mauritius only.

This syllabus is **not** available in all administrative zones.
Please check the syllabus page at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/9487** to see if this syllabus is available in your administrative zone.

Version 2

For the purposes of screen readers, any mention in this document of Cambridge IGCSE refers to Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education.

Cambridge Pathway

Why choose Cambridge International?

Cambridge International prepares school students for life, helping them develop an informed curiosity and a lasting passion for learning. We are part of the University of Cambridge.

Our Cambridge Pathway gives students a clear path for educational success from age 5 to 19. Schools can shape the curriculum around how they want students to learn – with a wide range of subjects and flexible ways to offer them. It helps students discover new abilities and a wider world, and gives them the skills they need for life, so they can achieve at school, university and work.

Our programmes and qualifications set the global standard for international education. They are created by subject experts, are rooted in academic rigour and reflect the latest educational research. They provide a strong platform for students to progress from one stage to the next, and are well supported by teaching and learning resources. Learn more about our research at **www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/our-research/**

We review all our syllabuses regularly, so they reflect the latest research evidence and professional teaching practice – and take account of the different national contexts in which they are taught.

We consult with teachers to help us design each syllabus around the needs of their learners. Consulting with leading universities has helped us make sure our syllabuses encourage students to master the key concepts in the subject and develop the skills necessary for success in higher education.

We believe education works best when curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment are closely aligned. Our programmes develop deep knowledge, conceptual understanding and higher-order thinking skills, to prepare students for their future. Together with schools, we develop Cambridge learners who are confident, responsible, reflective, innovative and engaged – equipped for success in the modern world.

Every year, nearly a million Cambridge students from 10 000 schools in 160 countries prepare for their future with the Cambridge Pathway.

School feedback: 'We think the Cambridge curriculum is superb preparation for university.'

Feedback from: Christoph Guttentag, Dean of Undergraduate Admissions, Duke University, USA

Quality management

Cambridge International is committed to providing exceptional quality. In line with this commitment, our quality management system for the provision of international education programmes and qualifications programmes for students aged 5 to 19 is independently certified as meeting the internationally recognised standard, ISO 9001:2015. Learn more at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/about-us/our-standards/**

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Important: Changes to this syllabus

For information about changes to this syllabus for 2026, go to page 37.

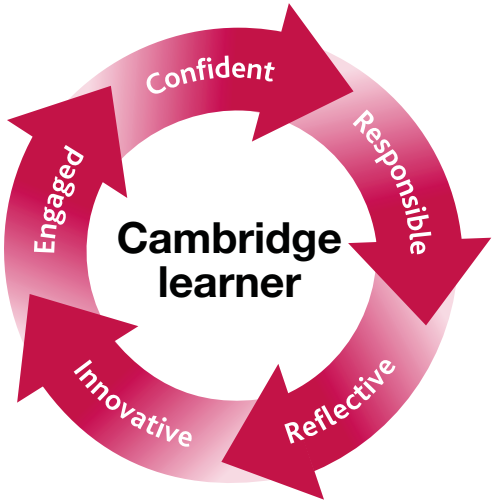
The latest syllabus is version 2, published December 2025. There are no significant changes which affect teaching.

Any textbooks endorsed to support the syllabus for examination from 2021 are still suitable for use with this syllabus.

1 Why choose this syllabus?

Key benefits

The best motivation for a student is a real passion for the subject they are learning. By offering students a variety of Cambridge International AS & A Levels, you can give them the greatest chance of finding the path of education they most want to follow. With over 50 subjects to choose from, students can select the ones they love and that they are best at, which helps motivate them throughout their studies.



Following a Cambridge International AS & A Level programme helps students develop abilities which universities value highly, including:

- a deep understanding of their subjects
- higher order thinking skills – analysis, critical thinking, problem solving
- presenting ordered and coherent arguments
- independent learning and research.

Cambridge International AS & A Level Hinduism develops a set of transferable skills. These include a reflective understanding of different values, opinions and attitudes and the ability to present and analyse differing perspectives and the concepts and values that underpin them.

Our approach in Cambridge International AS & A Level Hinduism encourages learners to be:

confident, understanding complex social, religious and/or philosophical concepts and expressing views, opinions and judgements around these

responsible,recognising the complexity and sensitivity of issues that give rise to religious debate

reflective, considering the diversity of views (including personal ones) and the ways in which they are supported and justified

innovative, exploring the role and significance of religion for Hindus in the contemporary world

engaged, by the complexity and diversity of religion and its responses to the challenges of the contemporary world.

School feedback: 'Cambridge students develop a deep understanding of subjects and independent thinking skills.'

Feedback from: Principal, Rockledge High School, USA

Key concepts

Key concepts are essential ideas that help students develop a deep understanding of their subject and make links between different aspects. Key concepts may open up new ways of thinking about, understanding or interpreting the important things to be learned.

Good teaching and learning will incorporate and reinforce a subject's key concepts to help students gain:

- a greater depth as well as breadth of subject knowledge
- confidence, especially in applying knowledge and skills in new situations
- the vocabulary to discuss their subject conceptually and show how different aspects link together
- a level of mastery of their subject to help them enter higher education.

The key concepts identified below, carefully introduced and developed, will help to underpin the course you will teach. You may identify additional key concepts which will also enrich teaching and learning.

The key concepts for Cambridge International AS & A Level Hinduism are:

- **Beliefs, faith, teaching and sources**
  Interpreting teachings, sources, authorities and ways of life in order to understand religion, beliefs and faith. Appreciating and responding critically to beliefs, faith and attitudes
- **Practices, application and ways of life**
  Exploring the impact of religion, beliefs and faith on how people live their lives. Appreciating that religious practices and ethics are diverse, change over time and are influenced by locations and cultures
- **Expression**
  Acknowledging that individuals and cultures express their beliefs, faith, ethics and values through many different forms. Appreciating that expression can develop and maintain individual and community faith.

International recognition and acceptance

Our expertise in curriculum, teaching and learning, and assessment is the basis for the recognition of our programmes and qualifications around the world. Every year thousands of students with Cambridge International AS & A Levels gain places at leading universities worldwide. Our programmes and qualifications are valued by top universities around the world including those in the UK, US (including Ivy League universities), Europe, Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

UK ENIC, the national agency in the UK for the recognition and comparison of international qualifications and skills, has carried out an independent benchmarking study of Cambridge International AS & A Level and found it to be comparable to the standard of AS & A Level in the UK. This means students can be confident that their Cambridge International AS & A Level qualifications are accepted as equivalent, grade for grade, to UK AS & A Levels by leading universities worldwide.

Cambridge International AS Level Hinduism makes up the first half of the Cambridge International A Level course in Hinduism and provides a foundation for the study of Hinduism at Cambridge International A Level. The AS Level can also be delivered as a standalone qualification. Depending on local university entrance requirements, students may be able to use it to progress directly to university courses in Hinduism or some other subjects. It is also suitable as part of a course of general education.

Cambridge International A Level Hinduism provides a foundation for the study of Hinduism or related courses in higher education. Equally it is suitable as part of a course of general education.

For more information about the relationship between the Cambridge International AS Level and Cambridge International A Level see the 'Assessment overview' section of the Syllabus overview.

We recommend learners check the Cambridge recognition database and university websites to find the most up-to-date entry requirements for courses they wish to study.

Learn more at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition**

Supporting teachers

We believe education is most effective when curriculum, teaching and learning, and assessment are closely aligned. We provide a wide range of resources, detailed guidance, innovative training and targeted professional development so that you can give your students the best possible preparation for Cambridge International AS & A Level. To find out which resources are available for each syllabus go to **www.cambridgeinternational.org/support**

The School Support Hub is our secure online site for Cambridge teachers where you can find the resources you need to deliver our programmes. You can also keep up to date with your subject and the global Cambridge community through our online discussion forums.

Find out more at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/support**

Support for Cambridge International AS & A Level			
Planning and preparation • Syllabuses • Schemes of work • Specimen papers • Teacher guides	**Teaching and assessment** • Endorsed resources • Online forums • Support for coursework and speaking tests	**Learning and revision** • Example candidate responses • Past papers and mark schemes • Specimen paper answers	**Results** • Candidate Results Service • Principal examiner reports for teachers • Results Analysis

Sign up for email notifications about changes to syllabuses, including new and revised products and services, at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/syllabusupdates**

Syllabuses and specimen materials represent the final authority on the content and structure of all of our assessments.

Professional development

Find the next step on your professional development journey.

- Introductory Professional Development – An introduction to Cambridge programmes and qualifications.
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Find out more at:
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Supporting exams officers

We provide comprehensive support and guidance for all Cambridge exams officers.
Find out more at: **www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide**

2 Syllabus overview

Aims

The aims describe the purposes of a course based on this syllabus.

The aims are to enable students to:

- develop knowledge and understanding appropriate to a specialist study of Hinduism
- develop an understanding and appreciation of Hindu thought and practice and its contribution to individuals, communities and societies
- develop an interest in a rigorous study of Hinduism and relate it to the wider world and their own experiences
- reflect on and develop their own values, opinions and attitudes in the light of their study of Hinduism
- engage with scholarly debate about Hinduism and develop the ability to express and justify their own opinions
- adopt an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religion which will form a solid foundation for further study.

Cambridge Assessment International Education is an education organisation and politically neutral. The contents of this syllabus, examination papers and associated materials do not endorse any political view. We endeavour to treat all aspects of the exam process neutrally.

Content overview

The syllabus content is presented in four broad topics. Students must study all the subject content.

Concepts in Hinduism and Development of Hinduism will be assessed in the AS Level assessment, Paper 1 and Paper 2.

Hinduism: Philosophy and Religion and Hinduism in Contemporary Society build on the knowledge and concepts developed in the AS Level course and are assessed in the A Level assessment, Paper 3 and Paper 4.

Paper 1 Concepts in Hinduism

Dharma and Dharmic Living

- Dharma
- Varnashramadharma
- Svadharma
- Sthri Dharma

Life and Liberation

- Samsara
- Maya
- Karma
- Moksha

Paper 2 Development of Hinduism

Origins and Development of Hinduism

- The Four Vedas
- Epics
- The Manusmriti

The Nature of Ultimate Reality

- Atman and Brahman
- Theistic Traditions
- One and the Many

Paper 3 Hinduism: Philosophy and Religion

Hindu Darshanas

- Samkhya and Yoga
- Advaita Vedanta
- Vishistadvaita Vedanta
- Dvaita Vedanta

The Nature of Hinduism

- Hinduism as a Religion
- Hinduism as a Plural Religion
- Approaches to Hinduism

Paper 4 Hinduism in Contemporary Society

Contemporary Hinduism

- Hinduism Outside its Place of Origin
- New Religious Movements
- Secularism

Ethical Debates in Hinduism

- The 'Caste' System
- The Rights and Status of Women

School feedback: 'Cambridge International AS & A Levels prepare students well for university because they've learnt to go into a subject in considerable depth. There's that ability to really understand the depth and richness and the detail of a subject. It's a wonderful preparation for what they are going to face at university.'

Feedback from: US Higher Education Advisory Council

Assessment overview

AS Level candidates take two compulsory papers, Paper 1 and Paper 2. A Level candidates take four compulsory papers, Paper 1, 2, 3 and 4.

All AS Level candidates take:

Paper 1

Concepts in Hinduism 1 hour 30 minutes

60 marks

Structured questions

Candidates answer **one** question from Section A and **one** question from Section B.

Assessment is based on the content for Concepts in Hinduism

Externally assessed

50% of the AS Level

25% of the A Level

and:

Paper 2

Development of Hinduism 1 hour 30 minutes

60 marks

Structured questions.

Candidates answer **one** question from Section A and **one** question from Section B.

Assessment is based on the content for Development of Hinduism

Externally assessed

50% of the AS Level

25% of the A Level

A Level candidates also take:

Paper 3

Hinduism: Philosophy and Religion 1 hour 30 minutes

60 marks

Structured and essay questions

Candidates answer **one** question from Section A and **one** question from Section B.

Assessment is based on the content for Hinduism: Philosophy and Religion.

Externally assessed

25% of the A Level

and:

Paper 4

Hinduism in Contemporary Society 1 hour 30 minutes

60 marks

Structured and essay questions

Candidates answer **one** question from Section A and **one** question from Section B.

Assessment is based on the content for Hinduism in Contemporary Society

Externally assessed

25% of the A Level

Information on availability is in the **Before you start** section.

There are three routes for Cambridge International AS & A Level Hinduism:

	Route	Paper 1	Paper 2	Paper 3	Paper 4
1	**AS Level only** (Candidates take all AS components in the same exam series)	yes	yes	no	no
2	**A Level** (staged over two years) Year 1 AS Level*	yes	yes	no	no
	Year 2 Complete the A Level	no	no	yes	yes
3	**A Level** (Candidates take all components in the same exam series)	yes	yes	yes	yes

* Candidates carry forward their AS Level result subject to the rules and time limits described in the *Cambridge Handbook*. See **Making entries** for more information on carry forward of results [and marks].

Candidates following an AS Level route are eligible for grades a–e. Candidates following an A Level route are eligible for grades A*–E.

Assessment objectives

The assessment objectives (AOs) are:

AO1 Knowledge and understanding

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of teachings, beliefs and practices, including relevance for individual Hindus and communities.

AO2 Analysis

Analyse, evaluate and discuss evidence, points of view and issues in Hinduism.

Weighting for assessment objectives

The approximate weightings allocated to each of the assessment objectives (AOs) are summarised below.

Assessment objectives as a percentage of each qualification

Assessment objective	Weighting in AS Level %	Weighting in A Level %
AO1 Knowledge and understanding	50	45
AO2 Analysis	50	55
Total	100	100

Assessment objectives as a percentage of each component

Assessment objective	Weighting in components %			
	Paper 1	Paper 2	Paper 3	Paper 4
AO1 Knowledge and understanding	50	50	40	40
AO2 Analysis	50	50	60	60
Total	100	100	100	100

3 Subject content

This syllabus gives you the flexibility to design a course that will interest, challenge and engage your learners. Where appropriate you are responsible for selecting resources and examples to support your learners' study. These should be appropriate for the learners' age, cultural background and learning context as well as complying with your school policies and local legal requirements.

In this syllabus we use a number of terms transliterated from Sanskrit. In Question papers and other assessment material we will use the spelling given in the syllabus. Candidates may use any acceptable spelling of the terms in their responses.

A number of the topics include ethical and political debate or contemporary issues related to social issues, human rights, educational rights and belief. Debating contemporary issues will require engaging with different viewpoints.

Teachers are encouraged to use a variety of sources and examples to illustrate the concepts and ideas in this syllabus.

Candidates will be expected to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses and implications of statements made about the concepts and ideas in this syllabus as part of the assessment. Evaluation should demonstrate understanding of a range of different views and there should be support for judgements and opinions expressed as part of the response.

Paper 1 Concepts in Hinduism

In Paper 1, learners will gain knowledge of the main beliefs that underlie Indic religious thought and unite the various Hindu traditions. They will gain an understanding of dharma, samsara, maya, karma and moksha. They will examine the ways in which these concepts are interdependent.

They will also consider the complexity of concepts and the impact they have on the lived experience of Hinduism.

Section A: Dharma and Dharmic Living

1.1.1 Dharma

Content

- The concept of dharma, and various ways in which the word dharma can be understood.
- The relationship of dharma to the Vedic concept of rita.
- Dharma and its relationship with the other purusharthas (living a righteous life)
  - artha
  - kama
  - moksha.
- The relationship of dharma to moral behaviour.
- The role of dharma in shaping society – Sadharana Dharma and Sanatana Dharma.
- Whether morality is universal, relative (situational) or a combination.
- The ideal of a 'dharmic society' with reference to Sadharana Dharma and personal dharma.
- The concept of adharma.
- The cycle of the four ages (Mahayuga) and the characteristics of Satya Yuga, Treta Yuga, Dvapara Yuga and Kali Yuga.

1.1.2 Varnashramadharma

Content

- The concepts of varna dharma and ashrama dharma and the way they vary for individuals.
- Whether it is possible or desirable for contemporary society to run according to the ideal of varnas and ashramas.
- Varnashramadharma as a united strategy for living and as related to ethical living in Hinduism.
- Difficulties and controversies associated with varnashramadharma in the modern world.
- The extent to which there is a place for varna and ashrama in modern society. The concepts of varna and jati and the differences between them.
- The difficulties and controversies surrounding the 'caste system' and the inequalities associated with it.
- The extent to which it is accurate to associate 'caste' with varna.

1.1.3 Svadharma

Content

- Meaning of the term svadharma (individual or personal dharma).
- The factors that influence personal understandings of svadharma including varna, ashrama, conscience and personal circumstance.
- How contextual and personal factors complicate ethical issues and choices regarding them.
- Situations when different dharmic obligations appear to contradict each other, including scriptural examples (e.g. when the dharma of Rama towards his wife clashed with that towards his subjects or Arjuna refusing to fight his family).
- Different ways the idea of svadharma is considered in Hindu life, including personal prayer, examining the conscience, looking for guidance in scripture, consulting a spiritual leader.
- The relationship between personal and universal dharma; the impact of dharma on life choices.

1.1.4 Sthri Dharma

Content

- Dharma as it relates to women and their traditional roles in society.
- The requirements traditionally associated with sthri dharma.
- The ways in which traditional roles are upheld or challenged in Hindu society.
- The extent to which female deities and role models such as Lakshmi, Durga, Sita and Draupadi conform to traditional expectations.
- The extent to which sthri dharma is interpreted and/or challenged by Hindu women in the modern world.

Candidates should be able to:

- reference examples from their own knowledge and experience, academic writing or relevant texts (see Scheme of work for suggestions of relevant texts)
- make links between practices and beliefs
- demonstrate understanding of the unity and diversity in contemporary Hinduism recognising that there may be a variety of beliefs and interpretations with differing significance for different traditions, individuals or communities
- consider the relevance of all the concepts above to contemporary Hinduism.

Questions may require candidates to draw on their knowledge from one topic or between several of the topics above. See section 4 Details of the assessment for more information.

Section B: Life and Liberation

1.2.1 Samsara

Content

- The meaning of the term samsara (literally ‘wandering’) as the cycle of birth, death and rebirth.
- Reasons why people become trapped in samsara (e.g. through ignorance of their true nature, the accumulation of karma, or too much attachment to the sensory world).
- Why people seek release (liberation) from samsara.
- Different attitudes towards samsara and liberation from it.

1.2.2 Maya

Content

- The meaning of the term maya as illusion; specifically the illusory nature of the apparent universe.
- Maya seen positively as the creative power of Brahman, or negatively as an illusion that prevents people from perceiving their true nature.
- Reasons why maya might be seen as an obstacle or a help towards liberation.

1.2.3 Karma

Content

- Karma as actions and their consequences, and the different forms these take.
- The meaning and significance of karma, vikarma and akarma.
- The meaning and significance of sakama karma and nishkama karma; nishkama karma as the path to moksha.
- Ways in which karma is accumulated and expressed including the role and significance of sanchita karma, prarabdha karma, agami karma.
- The role of karma in samsara and achieving liberation.
- Reasons why human rebirth has greater significance for achieving liberation.
- The extent to which karma can be considered just.

1.2.4 Moksha

Content

- Ways in which the term moksha can be understood including the concept of moksha as being one with Brahman or being with, but not identical to, an idea of deity.
- Meaning of jivan mukti and videha mukti; characteristics of someone who is jivan mukti.
- Different paths to moksha and how they relate to different understandings of the divine and the self.
- Ways that moksha is viewed by different Hindu traditions.
- The cat and monkey analogies for different religious paths.
- Different views concerning the role of personal effort in achieving moksha.
- Different paths to moksha and the implications of these paths for different individuals:
  - Jnana marga
  - Karma marga
  - Bhakti marga
  - Raja marga.

Candidates should be able to:

- reference examples from their own knowledge and experience, academic writing or relevant texts (see Scheme of work for suggestions of relevant texts)
- make links between practices and beliefs
- demonstrate understanding of unity and diversity in contemporary Hinduism recognising that there may be a variety of beliefs and interpretations with differing significance for different traditions, individuals or communities
- consider the relevance of all the concepts above to contemporary Hinduism.

Questions may require candidates to draw on their knowledge from one topic or between several of the topics above. See section 4 Details of the assessment for more information.

Paper 2 Development of Hinduism

In Paper 2, learners gain an understanding of the development of Hinduism through the changing significance and usage of religious texts. Learners will be expected to have a broad knowledge of the purpose, key ideas and overall structure of different forms of texts. A detailed analysis or close reading of the texts will **not** be required.

Learners will also gain knowledge and understanding of the different ways of understanding the divine, including the nature of Brahman and the great diversity that exists in the ways Hindus relate to the divine.

Section A: Origins and Development of Hinduism

2.1.1 The Four Vedas

Content

- Understand that there are four Vedas and their different areas of concern:
  - Rig Veda, hymns and prayers
  - Sama Veda, melodies and songs
  - Yajur Veda, liturgy and ritual
  - Atharva Veda, magic and medicine.
- Oral transmission of the Rig Veda.
- The unusual nature and debated status of the Atharva Veda.
- The structure and nature of Vedic writings; their significance and areas of interest:
  - Samhitas: prayers, mantras and rituals
  - Aranyakas: commentaries and meditations on the rituals and ceremonies
  - Brahmanas: commentaries and interpretations of the sacrifices and rituals
  - Upanishads: philosophical writings considering the nature of Brahman, atman and moksha.
- Concepts of shruti and smriti and the usual status of the Vedas as shruti.
- Difference between astika and nastika traditions within Hinduism.
- The importance of Vedic writings for Hindus and Hinduism; the relationship between Vedic Hinduism and Hinduism as it is practised today.

2.1.2 Epics

Content

- The usual nature of the epics as smriti.
- The nature and significance of the epics:
  - Ramayana
  - Mahabharata
  - The Bhagavad Gita.
- The relationship of the Bhagavad Gita and the Mahabharata.
- Outline the main events/points in each text.
- The stories told in the texts and the different ways in which they might be used and understood by Hindus.
- Consider how these stories relate to theistic traditions and Hindu practices.
- The importance of the epics for Hindus and Hinduism.
- Reasons why the epics might be more widely known and used than the Vedas.

2.1.3 The Manusmriti

Content

- The nature and concerns of the Manusmriti.
- The Manusmriti as a collection of laws about Hindu living and the roles of different groups within Hindu society.
- The different views on the status of this text and the reasons for the contested status of the Manusmriti.
- The impact of the Manusmriti on Hindu life and society and different ideas about how the Manusmriti should be used.
- The relevance of teachings from the Manusmriti in the contemporary world, and the reasons for any controversy.

The selected texts have been chosen for their significance to the religion of Hinduism and are not intended to be the subject of in-depth textual study. Therefore no specific lines, sections or episodes from the texts have been prescribed for study or will appear in examination questions. This is to allow teachers to choose the parts of the texts which are most appropriate for their students and course of study.

Students who wish to study some sections of texts may like to consider the following selections:

- The Vedas
  - Rig Veda 10.90, 10.129
  - Atharva Veda 11.05
  - Isa Upanishad
  - Katha Upanishad
- The Ramayana
  - Chapters 9, 17, 23, 27
- The Mahabharata
  - Chapters 25, 28, 40, 54
- The Bhagavad Gita
  - Chapter 2–V 11–38, V 47–50, V 54–72
  - Chapter 3
  - Chapter 9–V 26, 27, 32
  - Chapter 12
- The Munusmriti
  - Chapters 1, 5 (5.146–169), 12

A detailed analysis or close reading of the texts will **not** be required.

Candidates should be able to:

- demonstrate a broad knowledge of the purpose and key ideas presented in the texts
- demonstrate understanding that there may be a variety of beliefs and interpretations with differing significance for different traditions, individuals or communities
- consider the relevance of all the concepts above to contemporary Hinduism.

Questions may require candidates to draw on their knowledge from one topic or between several of the topics above. See section 4 Details of the assessment for more information.

Section B: The Nature of Ultimate Reality

2.2.1 Atman and Brahman

Content

- Different understandings of the divine:
  - nirguna Brahman
  - saguna Brahman
  - sat, chit, ananda
  - neti-neti
  - murti
  - ishvara
  - Devi/Shakti.
- Brahman as saguna (with attributes) and therefore knowable through the deities and implications of this for humans relating to the divine (ishvara, murti puja).
- The concept of Brahman as nirguna (without attributes) and implications of this for humans relating to the divine.
- Ideas about the knowability/unknowability of the divine and implications of this for humans relating to the divine.
- The different ways of understanding the relationship of atman with Brahman:
  - identical
  - the same but eternally distinct
  - a separate created being.
- Different understandings of the divine including as masculine, feminine or neither.

2.2.2 Theistic Traditions

Content

- The unity of Hinduism as a religion and the diversity of traditions within Hinduism.
- The core theistic traditions:
  - Vaisnavism
  - Shaivism
  - Shaktism
  - Smartism.
- The differences between these four broad theistic traditions including:
  - The main beliefs and practices of each tradition
  - Their main geographical area of influence.
- Areas of divergence and commonality within these traditions:
  - What aspects of belief and practice are distinctively part of a particular theistic tradition
  - The existence of different groups within a tradition and understanding of what they share.
- The influence of these theistic traditions and their significance in the religious lives of Hindus.
- Reasons why the different traditions exist and why particular Hindus might follow a particular tradition.
- The extent to which these are distinct and separate forms of Hinduism.

2.2.3 One and the Many

Content

- The meaning of different terms used to describe different theistic traditions:
  - Henotheism
  - Monism
  - Monotheism
  - Pantheism
  - Polytheism.
- Different forms of Hinduism in relation to these theistic traditions.
- The relationship between theistic perspective and concepts such as atman and moksha.
- The relationship between theistic perspective and practises such as murti puja and meditation.
- The significance of these theistic perspectives in Hindu thought and practice.

Candidates should be able to:

- reference examples from their own knowledge and experience, academic writing or relevant texts (see Scheme of work for suggestions of relevant texts)
- make links between practices and beliefs
- demonstrate understanding of unity and diversity in contemporary Hinduism recognising that there may be a variety of beliefs and interpretations with differing significance for different traditions, individuals or communities
- consider the relevance of all the concepts above to contemporary Hinduism.

Questions may require candidates to draw on their knowledge from one topic or between several of the topics above. See section 4 Details of the assessment for more information.

Paper 3 Hinduism: Philosophy and Religion

In Paper 3, learners will be introduced to Hindu Darshanas or philosophical schools. Learners will gain an appreciation of the study of Hinduism as a global world religion and the ways in which scholarship has engaged with it.

Learners will also consider modern scholarly debates about the nature of religion and the appropriateness of applying this term to Hinduism.

The content of this paper is tested through structured questions and essay questions. See section 4 Details of the assessment for more details.

Hindu Darshanas

3.1 Samkhya and Yoga

Content

- The meaning of the term Samkhya.
- The relationship between Samkhya and theism; the relationship between Samkhya and Yoga including Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga.
- The origins of the tradition, including the life of Kapila and the context in which he developed his ideas and the influence and significance of this context.
- Key ideas, including:
  - Purusha and Prakriti
  - the three gunas
  - evolution of the world
  - belief in multiple purushas but not in ishvara
  - the means of kaivalya
  - interrelationship, similarities and differences with Ashtanga Yoga, including the eight limbs and the role of ishvara.
- The possible influence of Kapila on the teachings of the Buddha.

3.2 Advaita Vedanta

Content

- The meaning of the term Advaita Vedanta.
- The origins of the tradition, including the life of Shankara, the context in which he developed his ideas and the influence and significance of this context.
- Key ideas, including:
  - the identity of the jiva atman with Brahman
  - nirguna Brahman
  - the nature of the world as maya
  - the nature of maya/jagat
  - jnana as the path to moksha
  - the usefulness, but ultimately unreal nature of ishvara and puja
  - the three levels of reality.

3.3 Vishistadvaita Vedanta

Content

- The meaning of the term Vishistadvaita Vedanta.
- The origins of the tradition, including the life of Ramanuja, the context in which he developed his ideas and the influence and significance of this context.
- Reasons why Ramanuja deliberately challenged the established traditions of Advaita.
- Key ideas, including:
  - the three real components of the universe, ishvara (paramatman), chit and achit, and their relationship to Brahman
  - the relationship of jiva-jagat to Brahman
  - the importance of saguna Brahman
  - the real existence of the material world and reasons given for it
  - bhakti as a path to moksha and the importance of puja.

3.4 Dvaita Vedanta

Content

- The meaning of the term Dvaita Vedanta.
- The origins of the tradition, including the life of Madhva, the context in which he developed his ideas and the influence and significance of this context.
- Key ideas, including:
  - the dualistic nature of the universe
  - the real distinction between Brahman and the jiva atman
  - the identification of Brahman with Vishnu
  - the difference between atman and Vishnu
  - bhakti as the only path to moksha
  - the importance of puja and devotion to Vishnu
  - the five differences between:
    - the individual self (jiva atman) and ishvara
    - matter and ishvara
    - different individual jiva atman
    - matter and jiva atman
    - various types of matter.

The Nature of Hinduism

3.5 Hinduism as a Religion

Content

- Different possible understandings of the word ‘religion’.
- The difficulties with using the term ‘religion’ to refer to Hinduism.
- The question of whether the different Hindu traditions constitute a single ‘religion’.
- Implications of ‘Hinduism’ as a term imposed from the outside.
- Hinduism as a lived tradition and cultural identity.
- The way in which scholarship of religion influences how Hinduism is understood.

3.6 Hinduism as a Plural Religion

Content

- The concept of pluralistic religion, and its relationship to Hinduism.
- Diversity in Hindu identity.
- Diversity and tolerance in Hindu society.
- The ways in which diverse traditions interact with and relate to Hinduism; Hindu attitudes and responses to non-Hindu religion.
- The question of what is or is not astika Hinduism.
- The relationship between Hinduism and the Shramana traditions (Buddhism and Jainism).
- Reasons for the rise of the Shramana traditions and their rejection of the authority of the Vedas.
- The debate about the influence of Hinduism on the Shramana traditions.
- Similarities and differences across Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism, including karma, rebirth and liberation.

3.7 Approaches to Hinduism

Content

- Hindus who have influenced the ways Hinduism is understood by non-Hindus:
  - Swami Vivekananda
  - M K Gandhi.
- The impact of Gandhi and Vivekananda on the way Hinduism is understood as a world religion.
- The influence of Ramakrishna on Vivekananda's understanding of Hinduism.
- The work of Vivekananda in framing Hinduism as a world religion.
- Gandhi's interest in Jainism and Christianity as sources of wisdom and ethics.
- Gandhi's presentation of ahimsa and vegetarianism as universal Hindu values.
- Satyagraha as a distinct way of achieving social justice.
- Their influence on contemporary Hinduism and how it is understood as a world religion by non-Hindus.

Candidates should be able to:

- demonstrate understanding of the different vedantic philosophies (see Scheme of work for suggestions of relevant reading)
- demonstrate understanding of areas of similarity, difference, compatibility and disagreement between philosophical traditions
- demonstrate understanding of the relationship between Hindu traditions and contemporary social issues
- demonstrate understanding of how Hindu traditions respond to contemporary social issues
- make links between practices and beliefs
- demonstrate understanding of unity and diversity in contemporary Hinduism recognising that there may be a variety of beliefs and interpretations with differing significance for different philosophies, traditions, individuals or communities
- consider the relevance of all the ideas above to contemporary Hinduism.

The assessment for Paper 3 will use a mixture of structured questions and essay questions. Any topic in Hinduism: Philosophy and Religion can be used for **either** structured **or** essay questions. Questions may require candidates to draw on their knowledge from one topic or between several of the topics above. See section 4 Details of the assessment for more information.

Paper 4 Hinduism in Contemporary Society

In Paper 4, learners will gain knowledge and understanding of Hinduism as it exists in the modern world. They will study Hindu communities outside India in order to understand the impact of migration on the way Hinduism is practised. Learners will conduct investigations into two new religious movements in Hinduism, including the reasons for their rise and popularity.

The content of this paper is tested through structured questions and essay questions. See section 4 Details of the assessment for more details.

Contemporary Hinduism

4.1 Hinduism Outside its Place of Origin

Content

- Hinduism outside India, in one country where there is a large Hindu community.
- The relevance of context (physical location, social surroundings) for the practice of Hinduism.
- The origins and development of this Hindu community.
- Religious issues for migrants, including the 'ban' on brahmins crossing the sea.
- Key festivals and how they are celebrated, including differences in religious emphasis.

4.2 New Religious Movements

Content

- Two new movements within Hinduism, including origins, practices and key teachings of these new movements:
  - International society for Krishna consciousness (ISKCON)
  - Sathya Sai International Organisation.
- Practices of ISKCON including:
  - bhakti
  - living in communities
  - sankirtana (chanting of holy names)
  - the 'four regulative principles'
  - preaching
  - Food for Life project.
- Practices of Sathya Sai International Organisation including:
  - living out the recognition of the divine within
  - virtues of Sathya (truth), dharma (right conduct), shanti (peace), prema (love), and ahimsa (non-violence)
  - japam (recitation of the name of God)
  - dhyaanam (meditation)
  - bhajan (congregational singing)
  - seva (selfless service).

continued

4.2 New Religious Movements continued

- Teachings of ISKCON including:
  - the achievement of moksha through bhakti yoga
  - the belief in Vishnu/Krishna as supreme and personal deity
  - parampara (succession of authority)
  - the Bhagavad Gita and Shrimad Bhagavatum as sources of scriptural authority
  - the spiritual equality of women.
- Teachings of Sathya Sai International Organisation including:
  - Sathya Sai Baba as the reincarnation of Shirdhi Sai Baba and as an avatar
  - the Oneness of God
  - the unity of all religions
  - the equality of all regardless of gender, 'caste' or religion
  - the centrality of love
  - the rejection of the term 'Hindu'
  - the importance of self development and spiritual understanding.
- The concept of proselytisation in relation to these new movements.
- Reasons for the popularity of new religious movements.
- The relationship between Hindu traditions and new religious movements; the extent to which these new movements can be considered Hindu.
- The influence of new religious movements on non-Hindu perceptions of Hinduism.
- The significance of new religious movements for contemporary Hinduism.

4.3 Secularism

Content

- The meaning of the term secular state and Gandhi's ideal of a secular state in which all religions have equal status.
- The relationship between a secular state and religion and whether secularism creates religious freedom and tolerance.
- The relationship between Hinduism and other religions in one country you have studied.
- The rise of Hindu fundamentalism and the reasons for the rise of the Hindutva movement.
- The ways Hindutva has influenced Hinduism and perceptions of Hinduism in a country you have studied.
- The relationship between the Hindutva movement and India.

continued

Ethical Debates in Hinduism

4.4 The 'Caste' System

Content

- The practical applications of varna and jati.
- The concept of varna in sacred texts.
- Ethical issues raised by the jati system as it is practised today.
- The work of social reformers and their significance for the 'caste' system:
  - Ram Mohan Roy and the Brahmo Samaj
  - Swami Dayanada and the Arya Samaj
  - M K Gandhi
  - B R Ambedkar and conversion of dalits to Buddhism.
- The impact of social reforms and reform movements on the application of the 'caste' system and the status of dalits.
- Reform movements within dalit groups and their significance.

4.5 The Rights and Status of Women

Content

- Traditional Hindu views on the rights and status of women.
- Different arguments around the practices of sati, dowry and roles within marriage.
- Traditional female figures such as Lakshmi, Durga, Kali, Parvati, Sita and Draupadi and their relationship to contemporary feminism.
- Contemporary views on the rights and status of women and their relationship with Hindu views.
- Concerns about women's rights that have arisen from traditional practices:
  - sati
  - dowries
  - roles/expectations within marriage.
- Reactions to gender-based violence.
- The education of women and girls.
- The work of social reform movements and female reformers.
- Ways social reform movements have addressed concerns over the rights of women.
- Women's collectives and movements and female reformers.

continued

4.5 The Rights and Status of Women continued

Useful examples of social reform movements who work with Indian women in a broadly Hindu context include:

- Savitribal Phule (1831–97)
- Tarab Shinde (1850–1910)
- Rita Banerji
- All India Women's Conference
- The National Federation of Indian Women
- All India Dalit Women's Forum
- National Federation of Dalit Women
- Mahila Samakhya programme
- The Gulabi Gang.

Candidates should be able to:

- demonstrate understanding of the relationship between Hindu traditions and contemporary social issues
- demonstrate understanding of the contribution of Hindu communities to multiculturalism
- demonstrate understanding of the ongoing development of Hindu traditions in the community you have studied
- demonstrate understanding of how Hindu traditions respond to contemporary social issues
- demonstrate understanding of the unity and diversity of contemporary Hinduism recognising that there may be a variety of beliefs and interpretations with differing significance for different traditions, individuals or communities
- demonstrate understanding of the impact of reform movements for different groups of people.

The assessment for Paper 4 will be a mixture of structured questions and essay questions. Any topic in Hinduism in Contemporary Society can be used for **either** structured **or** essay questions. Questions may require candidates to draw on their knowledge from one topic or between several of the topics above. See section 4 Details of the assessment for more information.

4 Details of the assessment

Across the assessment of all four papers, candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of Hinduism and to evaluate and analyse differing points of view, providing supporting evidence for these.

Candidates will be required to present their arguments using well-structured continuous prose.

Paper 1 Concepts in Hinduism

Written paper, 1 hour 30 minutes, 60 marks

50% of AS Level, 25% of A Level

This paper assesses the prescribed subject content for Paper 1 Concepts in Hinduism.

Candidates answer **one** question from Section A and **one** question from Section B.

Questions in Section A will sample content from Dharma and Dharmic Living

Questions in Section B will sample content from Life and Liberation

There will be a choice of two questions in each section.

Questions may contain a short passage from a Hindu text or a statement or quote about an aspect of Hinduism.

Each question will be divided into three parts totalling 30 marks:

- Part (a) 5 marks assessing AO1 knowledge and understanding
- Part (b) 10 marks assessing AO1 knowledge and understanding
- Part (c) 15 marks assessing AO2 analysis and evaluation.

Candidates must answer **all** parts of the question they have chosen.

Questions will be marked using the levels of response marking grids. Part (a) and (b) questions are marked using the AO1 knowledge and understanding marking grids and part (c) questions using the AO2 analysis and evaluation marking grid.

Candidates will be expected to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses and implications of statements made about the concepts and ideas. Students should be made aware that in evaluating a concept or idea we do not expect them to set aside personal opinion or belief, however we do expect them to acknowledge different ideas and justify their arguments.

Externally assessed.

Paper 2 Development of Hinduism

Written paper, 1 hour 30 minutes, 60 marks

50% of AS Level, 25% of A Level

This paper assesses the prescribed subject content for Paper 2 Development of Hinduism.

Candidates answer **one** question from Section A and **one** question from Section B.

Questions in Section A will sample content from Origins and Development of Hinduism

Questions in Section B will sample content from The Nature of Ultimate Reality

There will be a choice of two questions in each section.

Questions may contain a short passage from a Hindu text or a statement or quote about an aspect of Hinduism.

Each question will be divided into three parts totalling 30 marks:

- Part (a) 5 marks assessing AO1 knowledge and understanding
- Part (b) 10 marks assessing AO1 knowledge and understanding
- Part (c) 15 marks assessing AO2 analysis and evaluation.

Candidates must answer **all** parts of the question they have chosen.

Questions will be marked using the levels of response marking grids. Part (a) and (b) questions are marked using the AO1 knowledge and understanding marking grids and part (c) questions using the AO2 analysis and evaluation marking grid.

Candidates will be expected to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses and implications of statements made about the concepts and ideas. Students should be made aware that in evaluating a concept or idea we do not expect them to set aside personal opinion or belief, however we do expect them to acknowledge different ideas and justify their arguments.

Externally assessed.

Paper 3 Hinduism: Philosophy and Religion

Written paper, 1 hour 30 minutes, 60 marks

25% of A Level

This paper assesses the prescribed subject content for Paper 3 Hinduism: Philosophy and Religion.

Candidates are encouraged to draw comparisons and make evaluations between aspects from the different topics and read widely from academic sources.

Candidates answer **one** question from Section A and **one** question from Section B.
There will be a choice of questions in each section.

Section A will use structured questions. These questions can test any of the subject content from Hinduism: Philosophy and Religion.

Each question is worth 30 marks and consists of two parts:

- Part (a) 12 marks assessing AO1 knowledge and understanding
- Part (b) 18 marks assessing AO2 analysis and evaluation.

Candidates must answer **both** parts from the question they have chosen.

Part (a) questions are marked using the 12 mark AO1 kowledge and understanding marking grid and part (b) questions using the 18 mark AO2 analysis and evaluation marking grid.

Section B will use essay questions. These questions can test any of the subject content from Hinduism: Philosophy and Religion.

Each essay question is worth 30 marks:

- 12 marks for AO1 knowledge and understanding
- 18 marks for AO2 analysis and evaluation.

Essays will be marked using levels of response marking grids which cover both AO1 and AO2.

Candidates will be expected to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses and implications of statements made about the concepts and ideas. Students should be made aware that in evaluating a concept or idea we do not expect them to set aside personal opinion or belief, however we do expect them to acknowledge different ideas and justify their arguments.

Externally assessed.

Paper 4 Hinduism in Contemporary Society

Written paper, 1 hour 30 minutes, 60 marks

25% of A Level

This paper assesses the prescribed subject content for Paper 4 Hinduism in Contemporary Society.

Candidates are encouraged to draw comparisons and make evaluations between aspects from the different topics and read widely from academic sources.

Candidates answer **one** question from Section A and **one** question from Section B.
There will be a choice of questions in each section.

Section A will use structured questions. These questions can test any of the subject content from Hinduism in Contemporary Society.

Each question is worth 30 marks and consists of two parts:

- Part (a) 12 marks assessing AO1 knowledge and understanding
- Part (b) 18 marks assessing AO2 analysis and evaluation.

Candidates must answer **both** parts from the question they have chosen.

Part (a) questions are marked using the 12 mark AO1 kowledge and understanding marking grid and part (b) questions using the 18 mark AO2 analysis and evaluation marking grid.

Section B will use essay questions. These questions can test any of the subject content from Hinduism in Contemporary Society.

Each essay question is worth 30 marks:

- 12 marks for AO1 knowledge and understanding
- 18 marks for AO2 analysis and evaluation.

Essays will be marked using levels of response marking grids which cover both AO1 and AO2.

Candidates will be expected to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses and implications of statements made about the concepts and ideas. Students should be made aware that in evaluating a concept or idea we do not expect them to set aside personal opinion or belief, however we do expect them to acknowledge different ideas and justify their arguments.

Externally assessed.

Command words

Command words and their meanings help candidates know what is expected from them in the exams. The table below includes command words used in the assessment for this syllabus. The use of the command word will relate to the subject context.

Command word	What it means
Analyse	examine in detail to show meaning, identify elements and the relationship between them
Assess	make an informed judgement
Compare	identify/comment on similarities and/or differences
Contrast	identify/comment on differences
Define	give precise meaning
Describe	state the points of a topic / give characteristics and main features
Develop	take forward to a more advanced stage or build upon given information
Discuss	write about issue(s) or topic(s) in depth in a structured way
Evaluate	judge or calculate the quality, importance, amount, or value of something
Examine	investigate closely, in detail
Explain	set out purposes or reasons / make the relationships between things clear / say why and/or how and support with relevant evidence
Identify	name/select/recognise
Justify	support a case with evidence/argument
Outline	set out the main points
Summarise	select and present the main points, without detail

Phrases such as 'To what extent…?' may also be seen in the assessment for this syllabus.

5 What else you need to know

This section is an overview of other information you need to know about this syllabus. It will help to share the administrative information with your exams officer so they know when you will need their support. Find more information about our administrative processes at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide**

Before you start

Previous study

We do not expect learners starting this course to have previously studied Hinduism.

Guided learning hours

We design Cambridge International AS & A Level syllabuses to require about 180 guided learning hours for each Cambridge International AS Level and about 360 guided learning hours for a Cambridge International A Level. The number of hours a learner needs to achieve the qualification may vary according to each school and the learners' previous experience of the subject.

Availability and timetables

All Cambridge schools are allocated to an administrative zone. Each zone has a specific timetable. Find your administrative zone at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/adminzone**

Exams are available in the June series.

Exams are also available in the November series in Mauritius only.

Check you are using the syllabus for the year the candidate is taking the exam.

Private candidates can enter for this syllabus. For more information, please refer to the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries*.

Combining with other syllabuses

Candidates can take this syllabus alongside other Cambridge International syllabuses in a single exam series. The only exceptions are:

- syllabuses with the same title at the same level.

Group awards: Cambridge AICE

Cambridge AICE (Advanced International Certificate of Education) is a group award for Cambridge International AS & A Level. It encourages schools to offer a broad and balanced curriculum by recognising the achievements of learners who pass exams in a range of different subjects.

Learn more about Cambridge AICE at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/aice**

Making entries

Exams officers are responsible for submitting entries to Cambridge International. We encourage them to work closely with you to make sure they enter the right number of candidates for the right combination of syllabus components. Entry option codes and instructions for submitting entries are in the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries*. Your exams officer has access to this guide.

Exam administration

To keep our exams secure, we produce question papers for different areas of the world, known as administrative zones. We allocate all Cambridge schools to one administrative zone determined by their location. Each zone has a specific timetable.

Some of our syllabuses offer candidates different assessment options. An entry option code is used to identify the components the candidate will take relevant to the administrative zone and the available assessment options.

Support for exams officers

We know how important exams officers are to the successful running of exams. We provide them with the support they need to make entries on time. Your exams officer will find this support, and guidance for all other phases of the Cambridge Exams Cycle, at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide**

Retakes and carrying forward marks

Candidates can retake Cambridge International AS Level and Cambridge International A Level as many times as they want to. Information on retake entries is at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/retakes**

Candidates can carry forward the result of their Cambridge International AS Level assessment from one series to complete the Cambridge International A Level in a following series. The rules, time limits and regulations for carry-forward entries for staged assessment can be found in the *Cambridge Handbook* for the relevant year of assessment at **www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide**

Language

This syllabus and the related assessment materials are available in English only.

Accessibility and equality

Syllabus and assessment design

At Cambridge International, we work to avoid direct or indirect discrimination in our syllabuses and assessment materials. We aim to maximise inclusivity for candidates of all national, cultural or social backgrounds and candidates with protected characteristics, which include special educational needs and disability, religion and belief, and characteristics related to gender and identity. We also aim to make our materials as accessible as possible by using accessible language and applying accessible design principles. This gives all candidates the fairest possible opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding and helps to minimise the requirement to make reasonable adjustments during the assessment process.

Access arrangements

Access arrangements (including modified papers) are the principal way in which Cambridge International complies with our duty, as guided by the UK Equality Act (2010), to make 'reasonable adjustments' for candidates with special educational needs (SEN), disability, illness or injury. Where a candidate would otherwise be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to a candidate with no SEN, disability, illness or injury, we may be able to agree pre-examination access arrangements. These arrangements help a candidate by minimising accessibility barriers and maximising their opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding in an assessment.

Important:

Requested access arrangements should be based on evidence of the candidate's barrier to assessment and should also reflect their normal way of working at school. This is explained in the *Cambridge Handbook* **www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide**

- For Cambridge International to approve an access arrangement, we will need to agree that it constitutes a reasonable adjustment, involves reasonable cost and timeframe and does not affect the security and integrity of the assessment.
- Availability of access arrangements should be checked by centres at the start of the course. Details of our standard access arrangements and modified question papers are available in the *Cambridge Handbook* **www.cambridgeinternational.org/eoguide**
- Please contact us at the start of the course to find out if we are able to approve an arrangement that is not included in the list of standard access arrangements.
- Candidates who cannot access parts of the assessment may be able to receive an award based on the parts they have completed.

After the exam

Grading and reporting

Grades a, b, c, d or e indicate the standard a candidate achieved at Cambridge International AS Level. 'a' is the highest and 'e' is the lowest grade.

Grades A*, A, B, C, D or E indicate the standard a candidate achieved at Cambridge International A Level. A* is the highest and E is the lowest grade.

'Ungraded' means that the candidate's performance did not meet the standard required for the lowest grade (E or e). 'Ungraded' is reported on the statement of results but not on the certificate. In specific circumstances your candidates may see one of the following letters on their statement of results:

- Q (PENDING)
- X (NO RESULT).

These letters do not appear on the certificate.

If a candidate takes a Cambridge International A Level and fails to achieve grade E or higher, a Cambridge International AS Level grade will be awarded if both of the following apply:

- the components taken for the Cambridge International A Level by the candidate in that series included all the components making up a Cambridge International AS Level
- the candidate's performance on the AS Level components was sufficient to merit the award of a Cambridge International AS Level grade.

On the statement of results and certificates, Cambridge International AS & A Levels are shown as General Certificates of Education, GCE Advanced Subsidiary Level (GCE AS Level) and GCE Advanced Level (GCE A Level).

How students, teachers and higher education can use the grades

Cambridge International A Level

Assessment at Cambridge International A Level has two purposes:

1 to measure learning and achievement

The assessment confirms achievement and performance in relation to the knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the syllabus.

2 to show likely future success

The outcomes help predict which students are well prepared for a particular course or career and/or which students are more likely to be successful.

The outcomes help students choose the most suitable course or career

Cambridge International AS Level

Assessment at Cambridge International AS Level has two purposes:

1 to measure learning and achievement

The assessment confirms achievement and performance in relation to the knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the syllabus.

2 to show likely future success

The outcomes help predict which students are well prepared for a particular course or career and/or which students are more likely to be successful.

The outcomes help students choose the most suitable course or career

The outcomes help decide whether students part way through a Cambridge International A Level course are making enough progress to continue

The outcomes guide teaching and learning in the next stages of the Cambridge International A Level course.

School feedback: 'Cambridge International A Levels are the 'gold standard' qualification. They are based on rigorous, academic syllabuses that are accessible to students from a wide range of abilities yet have the capacity to stretch our most able.'

Feedback from: Director of Studies, Auckland Grammar School, New Zealand

Changes to this syllabus for 2026

The syllabus has been updated. This is version 1, published September 2024.

You must read the whole syllabus before planning your teaching programme. We review our syllabuses regularly to make sure they continue to meet the needs of our schools. In updating this syllabus, we have made it easier for teachers and students to understand, keeping the familiar features that teachers and schools value.

Changes to version 2 of the syllabus, published December 2025

Other changes	• The weblink on page 33 had been updated.

Changes to version 1 of the syllabus, published September 2024

Changes to availability	• Exams are available in the June series. • Exams are also available in the November series in Mauritius only.

Significant changes to the syllabus are indicated by black vertical lines either side of the text.

Any textbooks endorsed to support the syllabus for examination from 2021.

You should take account of the changes described above when using these textbooks.

School feedback: ‘While studying Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge International A Levels, students broaden their horizons through a global perspective and develop a lasting passion for learning.’

Feedback from: Zhai Xiaoning, Deputy Principal, The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China

We are committed to making our documents accessible in accordance with the WCAG 2.1 Standard. We are always looking to improve the accessibility of our documents. If you find any problems or you think we are not meeting accessibility requirements, contact us at **info@cambridgeinternational.org** with the subject heading: Digital accessibility. If you need this document in a different format, contact us and supply your name, email address and requirements and we will respond within 15 working days.

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